Lafayette Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 133, Lafayette, California 94549

President: William Wakeman (283-3908)
Editor: Shirley Thomson (284-2995)

Vol. XIX, No. 2
April 1992

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Many thanks to all those members who have donated to the funds for the Pony Express memorial and the restoration of our fire engine, "Old Betsy." In fact, we have also recruited a new member who, with a friend, would like to help in the restoration. But first the Society has entered Betsy in the Martinez Pony Express Parade scheduled for 1 o'clock on Saturday, April 25.

Marechal Duncan, chairman of the Pony Express Memorial Committee, has obtained a proclamation from the Lafayette City Council proclaiming April 23, 1992, to be Pony Express Day. Copies of the proclamation will be presented to re-enactment rider Joe Nardone and to Allie Anton, local winner of the essay contest sponsored by Joe Nardone. Allie's essay is reprinted on page four.

Our annual potluck dinner meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 12, at the Veterans Hall. Our speaker for that evening will be Tom Crews; he will talk about the history of the Pony Express and its rides through Lafayette. Richard Johnson will be in charge of dinner arrangements. See page three for more information.

In preparation for next month's historical walks for fourth graders, Collette Means conducted both downtown walks and cemetery walks for all docents in an attempt to cross train both groups. It was interesting to see how the two walks meshed historically. I've also led two historical walks recently—with the help of Ruth Dyer—for city staff members. The Society has received many complimentary comments on all these walks.

Thanks to Joan Merryman for her good works on our many photos, news articles and mementos. The most significant to me is an aerial photo of Lafayette (circa 1935) before Mt. Diablo Boulevard was rerouted east of Plaza Park.

Best regards,

Bill.

William Wakeman

"OLD BETSY" THANKS YOU

George Wasson, Chairman of the Fire Engine Committee and driver/caretaker of Old Betsy, our 1919 Ford Model T fire engine, is delighted to report a good response to the appeal for help in the last newsletter. Not only have ten renewing members put something extra in their dues checks toward the costs of the fire engine's repairs, but new member David Funk has volunteered to help George with maintenance work. >

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The committee, chaired this year by Marechal Duncan, has not completed its work at press time. Its slate of nominees for the Society's Board of Directors will be presented May 12. >

WELCOME TO NEW LHS MEMBERS

- Donald and Linda Linck, Boyer Circle, Lafayette
- David and Annette Funk, Silverado Drive, Lafayette

1991-92 Officers and Committee Chairs

President	*Bill Wakeman*
Vice President	*Jop Van Overveen*
Treasurer	*Shirley Thomson*
Recording Secretary	*Ruth Dyer*
Corresponding Secretary	*Ollie Hamlin*
Annual Potluck Dinner	*Richard Johnson and Ollie Hamlin*
Archives	*Bill & Irma Somerton*
Book Sales	*Ruth Dyer*
Fire Engine	*George Wasson*
Hist. Displays	*Bill & Irma Somerton*
Landmarks	*Bob Means*
Membership	*Jack & Barbara Bailey*
Oral History	*Ray Peters, Marechal Duncan, and George Wasson*
Newsletter	*Shirley Thomson*
Program	*Jop and Irene Van Overveen*
Publicity	*Bill Somerton*
Walking Tours	*Collette Means*
(Without portfolio)	*George Ely*

DUES

Student membership	*$2.50*
Family membership	*$10.00*
Business membership	*$50.00*
Life membership	*$100.00*

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next meeting of LHS Board members and committee chairs is scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, at the home of Ray Peters. Please call him at 283-5256 or 284-4124 to confirm attendance. Members are welcome. >

PLEASE NOTE: A star on your mailing label indicates your 1992 dues are unpaid. LHS Treasurer will be on hand to receive dues payments at the May 12 dinner meeting. Otherwise, you are invited to mail your check to P.O. Box 133, Lafayette, at any time of course.

– ANNUAL DINNER MEETING –
MAY 12, 1992

TOM CREWS
National Pony Express Association Member,
Researcher in Pony Express History,
will speak on

THE PONY EXPRESS
ST. JOE TO SAN FRANCISCO – WITH STOPS IN LAFAYETTE

6:00 Sarasaparilla Hour
7:00 Potluck Dinner
8:00 Program

Boots and bandanas, ginghams and jeans will be the order of the evening, so come dressed up in your best western gear. Park your pony outside please!

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Please bring a dish of six to eight servings for each person attending.
Hearty salads, meat or seafood entrees, and side dishes are needed.
Please also bring your own serving utensils.
Board members will bring desserts. Dinner drinks will be provided.

For more information, call dinner arrangements chairman Richard Johnson (283-0199) or program chairman Jop Van Overveen (283-3650).

TOM CREWS – MAY SPEAKER

An amateur historian with an enthusiastic interest in the Pony Express, Tom Crews lives in Concord and enjoys photography as hobby number two. He's spent many hours in recent months researching the overland routes of Pony Express riders between Sacramento and Oakland – compiling the first complete record of specific routes taken – and in the process he learned a great deal about terrain and trails near the end of the run in 1860 and 1861.

Join us on May 12 to learn about this chapter of our history. >

APRIL 23
LAFAYETTE'S PONY EXPRESS DAY

Lafayette citizens and officials will gather at Plaza Park on Thursday, April 23, at 7:00 p.m. to welcome Pony Express re-enactment rider/historian Joe Nardone and officially proclaim Lafayette Pony Express Day.

Mr. Nardone will ride from Martinez to Lafayette as part of the commemoration effort to mark the 132nd anniversary of the first Pony Express ride through the area. Horse and rider, making their way through modern traffic of Pacheco and Walnut Creek, are expected to arrive between 7:00 and 7:30 p.m. >

FOURTH GRADE ESSAY CONTEST

Lafayette School fourth-grade student Allie Anton will be honored on April 23 when the city commemorates Pony Express stops in Lafayette. Allie's essay, first place winner among those submitted, is in the form of a letter of application for a position as a Pony Express rider. Nancy Thude, Principal of Lafayette School, was contest judge.

Allie's essay is among papers in the packet to be carried by Pony Express rider Joe Nardone when he makes his re-enactment ride to Lafayette on April 23. >

Dear Sir,

I would like to be a Pony Express rider because it helps people get their mail. It is a hard working job and that's exactly what I'm looking for. I love horses and I am very good at riding them a very long way without stopping. I think I would be a strong and dedicated rider. I am 18 years old and I think the idea of the Pony Express is fantastic. Please recommend me to this job. Thank you. Sincerely,

Allie Anton

CONGRATULATIONS TO TAYLOR FARRINGTON & TROOP 204

Lafayette Boy Scout Troop 204 is in the news these days for its exceptional record – having *eleven* of its members achieve Eagle Scout status at the same time. One of those exceptional young men is 17-year-old Taylor Farrington, a junior at Campolindo and well-known to LHS members. We remember with gratitude his fine work in September 1991 in setting the signs to mark the former railroad stops on the present-day Lafayette bike trail.

Congratulations, Taylor! >

UPCOMING EVENTS . . .

April 23 . . . . . Lafayette Pony Express Day – 7pm, Plaza Park
April 25 . . . . . Martinez Pony Express Parade – 1pm
May 3 . . . . . Wisteria Tea, Concord Historical Society – 686-1287 for information
May 9 . . . . . Moraga Hist. Soc. day trip to Point Reyes – 376-9224 for information
May 12 . . . . . LHS Annual Potluck Dinner & Program Meeting – 6pm, Veterans Hall
July 17 . . . . . Moraga Hist. Soc. Annual Dinner Meeting – 376-6541 for information

MEMBER INFORMATION

last name | first name | spouse's first name

street address | phone number

city, state, zip code | date

Annual dues: Please check appropriate line indicating dues, attach check in the amount shown – adding any contribution you can make toward the fire engine repair fund and/or the Pony Express site marker – and mail to Lafayette Historical Society, P.O. Box 133, Lafayette, California 94549.

___ Student membership - $2.50
___ Family membership - $10
___ Business membership - $50
___ Life membership - $100

DUES $_____
Contribution to help maintain "Old Betsy" _____
Contribution toward Pony Express marker _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: $_____

Please indicate your areas of special interest

___ Archives
___ Landmarks
___ Fire engine
___ Telephone committee
___ Annual potluck dinner committee
___ Other: _____

___ Oral history
___ Photograph collection
___ Newspaper clippings
___ Walking tours
___ Pony Express

Peter Thomson in his blacksmith shop, circa 1900

Are you reading this before 7:00p.m., Thursday, April 23 ? Then . . .

PLEASE COME

TO LAFAYETTE'S PLAZA PARK to mark

PONY EXPRESS DAY, THURSDAY, APRIL 23

and welcome rider Joe Nardone when he arrives in Lafayette between 7:00 and 7:30 p.m.

(More information on page four.)

LAFAYETTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. Box 133
Lafayette, California 94549

FIRST CLASS MAIL